

South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

*Managing the Medicaid program to provide
the best healthcare value for South Carolinians.*

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Contact: Jeff Stensland
(803) 898-2584

South Carolina Wins Grant to Help Seniors and Disabled Return Home

About 200 seniors and disabled South Carolinians living in nursing facilities will have the option of returning home to receive care. The transitions are made possible through a new five-year, \$5.8 million federal grant awarded to the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

South Carolina was one of only 17 states to receive the competitively awarded grant from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

The grant, called the *Money Follows the Person* demonstration is designed for seniors and disabled people who receive Medicaid benefits and reside in a nursing facility. The award includes an enhanced federal match rate for state expenditures and will be used to subsidize an array of home medical care services, including home modifications that make it possible to transition out of nursing facilities.

DHHS is organizing a steering committee made up of elder care experts, advocates and other stakeholders to assist in implementing the new program. People may begin transitioning out of nursing facilities as soon as October 2007. Only individuals who have lived in nursing facilities for at least six months and who are eligible for Medicaid will qualify under the grant.

“We believe increasing funding for home and community based services is pragmatic, compassionate, and crucial to a balanced long term care system,” said Teresa Arnold of AARP South Carolina. “The South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services has been a leader in providing care in the community for many years now, and would easily be able to successfully partner with the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services with this new program.”

DHHS’ Community Long Term Care program already allows seniors and others who have not yet entered a nursing facility to receive care at home. Last year, more than 15,000 South Carolinians received services through the CLTC program.

The Money Follows the Person award applies specifically to Medicaid recipients who are current residents of nursing facilities and wish to return home. It is similar to the *Home Again* grant program the agency piloted four years ago. In 2006, about 16,000 Medicaid recipients lived in nursing facilities throughout the state.

“Our senior and disabled residents deserve the most dignified care options available,” said DHHS Director Robert M. Kerr. “While the *Money Follows the Person* option may not be right for everyone, we’re pleased we can offer more recipients the opportunity to make their own choices about where they live.”

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